

The Crane Report



INDUSTRY RESPONSE – SUICIDE PREVENTION MEDIA

Section-3-SUMMARY

ABSTRACT

This section established that suicide prevention materials in the construction industry often rely on negative, crisis-driven narratives. Our findings indicate that such approaches risk reinforcing despair, consistent with the Werther Effect and the documented phenomenon of vicarious trauma. In contrast, positive, solution-focused messaging, as demonstrated by the Papageno Effect, has greater potential to divert individuals from crisis and promote recovery. These observations underscore the importance of reframing industry communications to emphasise resilience and constructive outcomes rather than despair.

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Section 3 – Industry Response: Suicide Prevention Media

Content links of Full Section-3 Report

- How is the construction industry intervening to prevent suicides?
- Are psychoeducational videos being produced to help drive suicides down?
- Do the videos strike the right balance between story & intervention?
 - Video Analysis
 - Could such videos trigger a negative response?
 - Do the videos highlight the root causes of suicide within the construction industry?
 - Are there any sensitive aspects to the videos?
- Are there theoretical guidelines for creating suicide prevention videos?
 - The Papageno Effect
 - The Werther Effect
- What is Vicarious Trauma?
- Can suicide prevention videos have the desired effects?
- Does there exist a belief that materials must be depressing?
- Is there an overreliance on negative storytelling?
- Is the depressing messaging limited to video productions?
- The Rock-Bottom Trend
- The After Service or The Before Service?
- What guidance might provide for more positive outcomes?
- Reviewing the Podcasts
- Emoto's Water Experiments
- Section Conclusion





Section 3 Summary – Suicide Prevention Media in Construction

The construction industry has invested heavily in suicide prevention media, including videos, podcasts, and campaigns. Yet despite these psychosocial interventions, suicide rates have continued to rise. Our analysis suggests that well-intentioned materials may be undermined by their tone, structure, and delivery.

Many videos adopt a “rock-bottom” narrative: a man suffers in silence, experiences collapse, and only then receives support. Intervention points often appear late in the videos, leaving vulnerable viewers exposed to despair without the counterbalancing message of recovery. This risks reinforcing suicidal ideation, a dynamic known as the Werther Effect, rather than promoting hope through the Papageno Effect.

We also observed potential pitfalls in representation. Consistent casting choices (white male at risk, minority male as rescuer) may unintentionally distract from the suicide-prevention message, triggering defensiveness or alienation in the most vulnerable group: older white male workers. Negative messaging extends beyond video into campaigns and podcasts, creating the risk of vicarious trauma through constant exposure to bleak content.

By contrast, podcasts that balance emotional honesty with constructive outcomes show more promise. Informal, raw discussions tend to resonate with frontline workers, while polished interviews may appeal to managers. Both formats have value, but access and balance are critical; hopeful messages are often harder to find than fatalistic ones.

We propose a shift toward “Before Service” media, proactive, relatable stories of early help-seeking, everyday resilience, and manageable first steps. Authentic narratives do not need to centre on collapse to feel real. Embedding positive reinforcement, accessible guidance, and diverse storytelling may better align media efforts with genuine suicide prevention goals.



Key Findings – Section 3: Suicide Prevention Media

Video Analysis

Effectiveness of Messaging

1. Many psychoeducational videos produced for the construction industry risk being more suggestive of suicide than preventive.
2. They feature prolonged emotional build-ups with late points of intervention.
3. The brief “help arrives” segments are overshadowed by extended depictions of despair.
4. Accepted suicide-prevention standards, such as the Papageno and Werther Effects, appear to have been disregarded.

Narrative Risks

5. Prevention messaging is diluted by additional themes such as DEI or social justice, which may disengage or antagonise higher-risk groups.
6. Depictions of means and methods risk normalising suicidal behaviour by suggesting shared hopelessness.
7. Storytelling leans heavily on crisis and trauma, reinforcing a sense of futility.
8. On-site campaigns often present negativity as authenticity, as if pain and failure are the only genuine experiences.
9. Positive and relatable role models are largely absent.

Podcast Analysis

Format and Audience Reach

10. Informal “round-table” formats, while carrying a more negative tone, feel more relatable for frontline workers.
11. Formal interview styles can seem distant for site staff but resonate more with HR and leadership audiences.
12. Both formats add value, but a more balanced approach is needed to engage different at-risk groups.





Investigation Stage 2 / Stage 3 - We Request Your Support

Roadmap of the Investigation

Stage 1 – Desk-Based Investigation

Analysis of existing literature, statistics, international models, cultural influences, and industry narratives. (*This document.*)

Stage 2 – Survey of Experiences

In an online [survey](https://www.dsrmrisk.com/survey) we are asking you to promote across the sector, designed to capture personal testimonies: what contributed to lives lost, and what brought others back from the brink. <https://www.dsrmrisk.com/survey>

Stage 3 – Industry Collaboration

Structured dialogues with construction firms, unions, and industry bodies to explore their views on root causes and the adequacy of current responses. We invite your input, thoughts, ideas, and what you see as solutions...**just a few lines** - “*What do you think is the problem?*” (This phase is currently running in parallel with Stage 2)

Please send your thoughts to: contact@dsrmrisk.com (Anonymous is Okay)

Stage 4 – Expanded Data

Incorporation of data from Scotland and Northern Ireland (*not currently included in official ONS reporting*), alongside further refinement of UK-wide analysis.

Together, these stages aim to provide both evidence and lived experience, enabling a clearer understanding of risk and more effective prevention strategies.

Stage 4 will be the Final Crane Report.

